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off so easily. The denunciation against him is dreadful; but so obscurely expressed, that I cannot at present tell, whether Crito means to get into the publisher's company, and try to get him to *touch his coat*; then swear against him, and get him sent to Carrickfergus for six months, and then kept until he shall give security to publish no more Magazines, in which one word of truth, knowledge, or useful information can be found.

The heat of your fancy took a very unusual flight in its disinterment of Quail. The designing part was fine; but the colouring was so clumsily laid on, that the figure became hideously ridiculous. You know well enough that such things are done every night in London, and even in *auld Reekie*, without bringing a particle of disgraceful character on either of the places. As likewise that a lodge of Resurrection-men has been formed in Brown's Square, who sold this dead body to four

young Chirurgeons for dissection. It was to be delivered on the ruins of the bridge now falling to pieces on the Lagan; this was *their* first essay; the *purchasers* were likewise novices, and the splash of a lighterman's pole in the tide, frightened away all the parties, except the subject in the coffin. Next time your fancy takes flight, I hope you will light upon a better subject.

You may rely on it Mr. Editor, that the orgies a-la-mode de Armagh of 12th July last, and the consequent proceedings, have brought more disgrace upon the town of Belfast, than if the aforesaid grand lodge of resurrection-men would "burst the cerements" of every cell in this cemetery, and deposit the contents thereof even on the great bridge by which you come into town from Scotland.

A. A. P.

Friar's-Bush, 10th March, 1813.

MONTHLY RETROSPECT OF POLITICS.

IT will perhaps appear an Irish way of beginning a *Retrospect*, yet, we are tempted to exclaim, what then will come of all this secret negotiation in the cabinet, and this continued fighting, at the same time, in the field; this strange and unprecedented medley of pens, and of pikes; of Cossacs scouring the country, and couriers encountered by Cossacs; of diplomatic courtesies alternating with the roar of artillery? Will the issue of all this, be an increase of freedom and happiness to the people, or will it terminate merely in an augmentation of arbitrary power in the rulers of the people? can the past, in this point, (perhaps the chief point worth consideration,) reflect any radiance on the obscurity of the future? Destiny, terrific maid, holds the balance. It now vibrates in her hand; which of the scales will finally preponderate, that which holds popular right or that which contains sovereign power?

Will the *personal* character of an ambitious individual (and such, say what we will, is, almost always, the pivot of public affairs,) not only keep the great nation he governs in constant agitation, mingling his own mind with the mighty mass, and thus heating it up to that glowing point which makes it perfectly malleable to all his purposes; but will he *also* extend the same mind abroad in every direction, or, which amounts to the same thing in effect, will he inspire the different sovereigns of Europe with tendencies and dispositions similar to his own, and equally hostile to human happiness; enlisting them, as it were, for life, into the military vocation, attracting them by the influence of that fashion which has already led so many monarchs from their fêtes and firesides, and carried even the Czar of Muscovy, from the care of his own empire, in a dashing excursion, as far as Fountainbleau.

Napoleon, though deemed the common enemy, may yet have given the *ton* to the coterie of kings, and their apparent successes may keep up the taste, or, more truly speaking, the rage, which halloo, and hunts the one half of mankind to butcher the other. A taste for war, like a taste for gambling, may soon become necessary to deliver the high and mighty potentates of this earth from the languor and irksomeness of situations, where nothing is left to wish for; and which *they* may deem well exchanged for the spirit-stirring, yet anxious enjoyments afforded by the incidents of a campaign.

Charles III. of Spain boasted to a foreign ambassador, that he had killed, with his own hand, 539 wolves, and 5323 foxes, "so that you see," said he, with a smile, "my diversion has not been useless to my country." And happy indeed, comparatively happy, is that country where the sovereigns spend their days, as hereditary huntsmen of noxious animals, the leading feature of the Spanish monarchs. Happy, if the amusements of sovereigns take no turn more carnivorous, and, if their prevailing passion will not be to keep up the royal hunt, which Nimrod first began, that savage sport which breeds up human hounds to join in the chase, and makes famine, sword, and fire, leashed together, "crouch for employment."

For, in truth, the clay is not more workable in the hands of the potter, than most, if not all, the nations of Europe appear to be in the hands of the ruling potentates, whose prevalent turn of mind, whatever it may be, forms and fashions the conduct of the mass to the propensities of the individual. If those propensities happen to take a martial direction, the whole powers, and capacities, the whole thoughts and inclinations of the people are quickly made in-

strumental to the *morale* and the *materiel* of the military cast. This cast influences not only the whole agency of the state, but changes almost entirely the manners of the multitude, that is to say, their *morals*, for whether the fact be comfortable, or consoling, it is the fact, that the people en masse, display throughout Europe, a passive inertness which receives and retains impressions of *whatever* kind, and impulse in *whatever* direction, with a facility and indifference which is truly astonishing.

Will then the continent of Europe come to be considered as a large board, for the diversion of its different potentates at *Polish draughts*, until intoxicated by temporary successes, they become so desperately fond of the *game*, as to squander away the permanent fire-side happiness of their people for the love of conquest, and the speculation of adding territory to territory? The spirit of conquest never cultivates what it has, nor seeks for the riches of its own territories, but finds in the event that a large accession of dominion is a source of insecurity, rather than an accession of real power. The aggrandizements of Napoleon have been his ruin; and the Rhenish confederation, the occupation of the Prussian fortresses, the iron crown of Italy, and the temporary subjection of the Spanish peninsula, have in their consequences, through the desertions and defections which naturally take place on a reverse of fortune, in members of an Empire so loosely jointed, and imperfectly assimilated, those acquisitions of military adventure, brought with them a false sense of security, and thus have, in reality, brought into imminent jeopardy his own Kingdom, and his own Crown.

It is not the vulgar, venal tongue or pen, which will prevent us from

saying that he defends both *heroically*. Deserted by his allies in the hour of battle, (such is the *public* honour of military commanders,) wretchedly seconded by those sovereigns of paste-board, his two paltry brothers, Joseph and Jerome, (while his poetic brother, Lucien, is giving a masqued ball and supper to the neighbourhood of Taunton, at the very time Napoleon is fighting for his crown, and his people,) abandoned by all, by the sovereigns he had made, and by the sovereigns he had saved, even betrayed by the very legislative body, which ought to have roused an *invaded* country to the most desperate resistance, he disdains to compromise with the hostile powers, or to degrade himself by an armistice while the enemy remains in the territory of France. A hero is not less heroic, during the period of adversity; and we can never call him a tyrant, to whom the great mass of the people adheres, in his greatest misfortunes.

Will then the coalesced powers take warning from this signal example of the instability of fortune, and will the spirit of conquest contract itself into the legitimate causes of war? That there are such causes, no one will deny; but we will assert, that the more mankind is advanced in knowledge, and civilization, the fewer occasions there will be of recurring to this (in its original,) most savage mode of settlement, and in its constant recurrence, the most disgraceful reproach of the Christian world, whether sovereigns or subjects act as principals, or accessaries. Will not the last twenty years afford a sufficient trial of this mode of meliorating the condition of mankind; and will the monarchs of Europe, from an ocular inspection of the miseries of war, and instructed by the striking mutation of human affairs in the highest, even more than

in the lowest situations? Will they return to their capitals, with the fixed determination of keeping out the revolutionary torrent, by connecting the sovereign authority more closely with the rights, and with the happiness of the people? Will they come so far from home, as Frankfort, to give lectures on the principles of public law, and the rightful independence of nations; and, after having been thus nobly supported by the people in this arduous contest, will they retire to their homes, without the least marks of grateful return for the services of that people, or any recognition of those political rights, and that individual independence, which is the guarantee of permanent *tranquillity*, and the strongest support of legitimate authority, founded, as it ought to be, on common utility?

We think, that from the period when France was invaded, the spirit of conquest, and the wish of aggrandizement, migrated from the breast of Napoleon to that of the coalition, the diseased and dropsical desire of extending the surface of an Empire, rather than adding to its *solid contents*. How small an extent of this globe has yielded "ample room and verge enough" for the greatest achievements, and works that give to man his terrestrial immortality! What an immense superficies is condemned to a Siberian unproductiveness, while the ruling powers, not looking to make the most of what they possess, are devising means of partitioning other countries, and augmenting *much*, by the addition of *much more*! We have great doubt, whether the partition of France would contribute to the deliverance of Europe, the present watch-word of the war, or to that national independence, which is held out as the great object of the European confederation. The deliverance of Eu-

rope will be best effected by peace, that just and necessary peace, which will develop all the capabilities of all countries, without a predominance in any, either mercantile or military, which must obstruct the gifts of nature, or the advantages of geographical situation. The deliverance of Europe will be best effected by that countenance and protection given to political and personal liberty, and that reverence to freedom of conscience which in the internal administration of a country, gives it permanent tranquillity, as well as the strongest degree of external power. The deliverance of Europe will not be effected by the spirit of conquest succeeding the spirit of revolution, and enormous masses of monarchy growing still greater by accessions of territory, and new partitions of the continent of Europe.

We have neither the ability nor the inclination to give a diary of the campaign. The accounts on both sides are perhaps designedly defective in distinctness and precision. The allied forces have justified the violence and encroachment of the French Emperor, by acting upon his plan; and such is the morality of the leagues which princes form, and the mutability of their manifestoes, they now have resolved to reduce an independent people to a compulsory choice of their sovereign. Sound policy as well as public morality, seemed to require that the public declaration of the Prince Regent to Parliament, and the authorized proclamation of the Allies, should not be falsified by any subsequent acts at variance with opinions and promises so solemnly promulgated. We are still slow to believe that the Crown Prince of Sweden will ever set a hostile foot upon the breast of his mother country. No deputy on his part was nominated to negotiate

an armistice; and we think, that in his correspondence with his son, Oscar, it would form a strange lesson in morality and natural affection, to say, "On such a day, my dear son, we entered France, laid waste the country that cradled and cherished your father, sacked several towns, put the inhabitants to the sword, and illustrated, by several brilliant conflagrations, the deep-seated regard we bear to the land of our nativity, and to the first maker of our fortunes."

The allied armies have invaded France on a broad line of operation. Instead of concentrating their forces, or advancing in a single direction, where one army might be ready to support the defeat, or follow up the success of another, they have advanced from different and distant points; and although they have found it more difficult, on this account, to act in combination, yet Bonaparte has thus been obliged to march alternately against each, without being enabled, as it seems, to leave in the meantime a force sufficient to prevent the advance of the other. Various actions have been fought with various success, but none of that decisive nature which would determine a retreat across the Rhine, or on the other hand, would decide the fate of the capital. The French have been generally successful, but still the state of the campaign seems to be nearly equally balanced. Towns are taken and retaken; armies advance, retrograde, and then again advance. The Allies have failed in their coup-de-main against Paris; but, on the other hand, Napoleon has, in his turn, been unsuccessful in his attempts effectually to break, and entirely to separate, the Silesian and Austrian armies. He is compelled to resort to the most harassing movements,

from point to point, in order to prevent them from again advancing, and to save his capital.

Napoleon appears to feel strong in the attachment of the French people. He issues decrees against all Frenchmen wearing badges of the "*ancient Dynasty*," and executes persons in consequence of such treason. He directs the people, without waiting for the command of municipal authorities, to use every means of hostility against the invaders, and on the whole, it may be suspected, that if the allies demanded an armistice merely as a "*ruse de guerre*," (in plain English, a breach of honour, for a particular purpose,) he also may have *his* design of drawing on the allied forces, and holding them in perilous uncertainty, until his numerous reinforcements enable him to strike a decisive blow, like that of Austerlitz or Jena. If, however, Lord Wellington, taking advantage of the reduction of Soult's army, and after accomplishing the passage of the Adour, should advance to Toulouse, and be in time to co-operate with the allied armies, it will require all the power and generalship of Bonaparte, to resist the comprehensive and extended operation.

In the mean time, however, it appears that the communication between the armies of Blucher and Schwartzberg is kept up with difficulty, and that the former, in his advance from Soissons to Meaux, (only 25 miles north of Paris,) is in danger of being cut off; which would necessarily occasion a speedy retreat of the Austrian army across the Rhine. *In that position*, Bonaparte might, with honour, assent to the preliminaries of peace, which can scarcely be negotiated with a hope of success, while the allied armies keep their station in the heart of his country. No treaty is to be made when

the boarders come up the quarter-deck, but there must happen either retreat on the one side, or surrender on the other. When the Allies came to the Rhine, there was then that equiponderance of power in the belligerents, and, we hoped, that equanimity in the use of it, which, of themselves, supplied a virtual basis for successful negotiation; but the moment when France was invaded, a number of other motives, a number of other interests, political and personal, interposed, to prevent all chance of immediate accommodation. Then the Bourbons were to be brought forth, who were screened before from the public eye, and a change of Dynasty was to be accomplished in France, not by any recurrence to the will of the People, but by the force of arms. The very principles of national independence which the allies promulgated at Frankfort, they are now fighting to destroy; and after having found it impracticable to separate the people of France from their sovereign, by assuming a conciliatory tone of morality and magnanimous regard to the rights of nations, they are now putting their own previous good fortunes to extreme hazard of a fatal reverse, by the trial of subjugating the independent nation of France, as well as of conquering its sovereign, legitimated by the choice of the people, both in success and misfortune.

It is now confidently said, that a decisive victory has been obtained by Marshal Blucher, at Laon, on the 8th inst., who had there concentrated the Prussian and Russian forces, and who was not only successful in the general engagement, but in several succeeding contests, in consequence of which an advance was made to not more than four miles from Paris; while the Austrian corps d'armée under Prince Schwartzberg

berg had defeated the French general Oudinot, and was pushing forward with rapidity to Paris. The Paris papers to the 13th, are silent upon these great successes of the Allies on the 8th, but they seem to forebode an immediate attack of the capital, and endeavour (as well as they can) to animate the inhabitants to a determination to rescue themselves from pillage, conflagration, and death.

It appears, on the whole, that the allied troops are at least equal to their opponents in bravery and discipline, and that the event of the campaign has been attributable to the superiority of numerical force, and the irresistible and continued impulse of those enormous masses of men, whose losses are always speedily supplied from great depots of reserve, and which, however obliged to retrograde for a little, are soon so fully re-inforced as to move forward with resistless momentum to the accomplishment of their purpose. Never since the fall of the Roman Empire, when the North of Europe poured down upon the South, did such hosts, or hordes, of armed men, oppress the earth; and although actual combatants cannot be supposed to have any sympathy in the miseries of invasion, yet we think that the citizen-people, even in these kingdoms, trained as they have been in sentiments of hostility, must feel some compunctions of humanity for the miseries now endured by another citizen-people, separated only by a narrow channel; particularly on reflecting that, in the mutability of fortune, the same dreadful visitations may be experienced by every metropolis in Europe.

It yet remains to be seen, whether the French revolution or the impending conquest of France will occasion most injury to the liberty and happiness of Europe. This invasion

(and whether it will end in conquest is still uncertain,) proceeds upon the acknowledged principles of vengeance, and of retaliation; and Russians declare "that if Frenchmen will not repair to their standard, or if they will show any signs of hostility even to Cossacs, their houses shall be destroyed, and the inhabitants treated as traitors and robbers!" Such is the new interpretation of the Frankfort manifesto, when Cossacs become the expounders of the law of nations! But all is satisfactorily reconciled to the parties concerned, by the phrase "ruse de guerre!" Thus the declaration of such heightened morality, and regard to national independence turns out to have been nothing but a "ruse de guerre!"—the proposition of an armistice made by the allied generals, another "ruse de guerre!"—the compliments and expressions of friendship made by Alexander to Caulaincourt, another "ruse de guerre!" In short, Napoleon seems to have adopted no other mode but fighting openly and incessantly in the field, while the allied forces make use of every small artifice to blind and mislead, along with their grand manœuvres. The negotiations for peace still go on, and the victories of the allies are ostentatiously set forth, possibly with a view of terminating the war with eclat; for until Paris itself be occupied by Russians, Prussians and Austrians, we shall entertain doubts of the extent of these victories exhibited in the public prints.

An attempt to take Bergen-op-zoom, one of the strongest places in Europe, by storm, has met with a most unfortunate termination. It is said that our troops were raw and unexperienced, totally unqualified for such a difficult and dangerous operation; yet, had they been seconded by Bulow's corps, (which

departed for France, leaving the strong places essential to the safety of Holland in the hands of the French,) a very different result might have been expected.

The new constitution for Holland, which professes to fix the independence, popular and political, of the country, emanates entirely from the Sovereign Prince of the Netherlands, and is determined to be a hereditary monarchy, without any convocation of the representatives of the people. An assembly is to be chosen by a special commission from the sovereign, and the people, if they chuse the invidious task, may object to the appointment: a *negative* freedom, at the best.

We would, most willingly, look forward to peace *abroad*, as being with its others blessings, auspicious to tranquillity *at home*, through the measure of Catholic Emancipation, so necessary to the integrity, the happiness, and if we may say so, the independent unity of the British Empire; not the less *one* (O believe it!) in the form or powers of government, because political liberty, in due proportion, is made to reach every individual of a people; not the less *one* because a liberty spreading only among partibular branches, and aggravating the misfortune of those who are deprived of it, may be lessened, and well exchanged, for that general security and satisfaction, which are the great ends of all civil institutions, and which, in fact, form the only soil where the natural fruits of liberty can grow, *viz.* riches, plenty, national education, learning, and all the liberal arts. Political liberty is not a luxury intended for the rich, but it is absolutely *necessary* to a competent enjoyment of the conveniencies of life, to that ease and plenty, which, in all ranks, must precede, not only improve-

ment in arts and learning, but even *moral* melioration. Political degradation, and, in consequence, poverty and want among the lower orders, have been the true sources of ignorance and barbarity in this,* as in other countries, and political distinctions among the higher orders, is not the English constitution, but despotism under a masque.

During war, a military rule, in greater or less degree, reigns throughout the whole public policy, and thus may conceal the opprobrium of civil exclusions, but on the recurrence of peace, the important distinction will manifest itself in all

* We have just seen a compend of the History of Ireland, written by John Lawless, esq. a zealous and active member of the Catholic Board. We acknowledge, that it is, with reluctance, we look back in particular to Irish history. We feel somewhat of the same instinctive antipathy which we see expressed by animals, when they are driven into the slaughter-house, and start back with involuntary horror. In this charnel-house of sufferings and crimes, we view human nature with alternate terror and indignation. Yet he who reads Leland and Temple, is, in painful duty, bound to read Currie and Lawless. Until that rare, and, perhaps, we may say, monstrous phenomenon arise, who can write the history of Ireland with an indifference and impartiality, impassive to the best feelings of country and of kind, it may be the best resource to read authors of opposite parties, and to extract the average of truth from the contrast or the comparison. Mr. Lawless has certainly not a little of the vehemence of *diction*, characteristic to Irish authors, but his representation of *facts* is absolutely necessary to preserve a balance of justice in the perusal of this revolting history, the shame of modern times, and the savagery of boasted civilization. Notwithstanding the aforesaid repugnancy, which, at this period, particularly, would incline us to look forward to peace, and unity, and concord, rather than rake up the ashes of scarcely extinguished conflagration, we shall probably take an opportunity of making some farther remarks on this ardent production.

its deformity, and the invidious comparison constantly before the eyes, will distract society, and make peace fruitless and unproductive, *unless* the legislature (as we trust will be the case) is resolved, really to unite, and permanently to consolidate the British Islands, into one continent of free constitution.

When peace therefore, arrives, the legislature will, we trust, be at leisure to consult the genius and justice of the English constitution, and by an impartial distribution of its privileges, give that productiveness to every part of the British Empire, which is so much wanted, to heal the wounds of war, and even to bear the unexampled burthens which will be laid upon the people in consequence of war. We doubt not that Parliament will take the case of the Catholics of Ireland into their grave and instant consideration. With respect to our suggestions of having a plea made for the Catholic claims, at the *bar* as well as in the *body* of the house, we are instructed by a patriotic and popular print (whose expression of its own merits, is, however, so great, as to supercede any necessity, on our part, of higher commendation) that the house is not in the habit of hearing lawyers at their bar, speaking against the *existing* law, but only on the provisions of bills in "transitu," or in their passage into law. This may be the case; yet certainly the bill of emancipation, or of relief, must, like other bills, have its different stages in its progress to law, and if advantage could be taken, in any part of this progress, so that such men as Curran, Brougham, Jeffery, and Finlay, for Protestant advocates, and O'Connell, Scully, and O'Gorman, as Catholic advocates, could be heard before the national assembly, either in explanation, elucidation, or justification

of the bill in general, or any of its provisions, we should venture to designate the occasion as most happy, for essentially serving this country, as well as securing their own immortal glory.

It is stated, that early on the meeting of parliament, the Irish secretary is to introduce a bill for the purpose of amending the convention act, by which no meeting, whether aggregate or not, shall be deemed a legal assembly, unless the sheriff of the bailiwick, or a magistrate presides. So that all public assemblies, and of course the Catholic Board, must meet under the penalty of a misdemeanour, unless they conform to those provisions of the intended bill. The Catholic Board is therefore near to the period of its dissolution, and the right of petitioning must be exercised from individual to individual subscribers, or under the strict superintendence of a magistracy more or less under the influence of the crown. As long as it is possible to petition, let petition be made, and if other rights be withheld, let the Catholics cling to the sole and sacred right of those that suffer.

The Board has been a mirror of the Catholic character; ardent and impassioned; warm in its attachments, and frank even in its enmities; honest and candid in the whole of its proceedings; courting the light, and fearless of investigation; with a strong sense of the necessity of political privileges in their full extent, to the right use and quiet enjoyment of either civil freedom, or religious independence.

As in all descriptions of religion there is to be found a tincture of inordinate zeal, which, bordering on enthusiasm, becomes selfish, self-sufficient, intolerant, and exclusive, it is not to be wondered at, that some of this pride and presumption,

the offspring of ignorance joined to a heated imagination, and too often instigated in secret by priestly power, has been displayed in the Board, and thus been reflected to a great distance, and to the great rejoicing of their enemies, from this mirror of the Catholic mind. But we do most sincerely rejoice, that the majority of that Board have always acted so as not to supply a strong argument to their most embittered enemies; and have spoken so, as to have clearly proved to Parliament and their fellow-citizens, that, in being devoted to their own mode of worshipping the common Father of us all, they do not encourage sentiments of enmity and exclusion against those who are attached to other modes of rendering themselves acceptable children, and that after their own sad experience upon earth, the Catholics of Ireland have no wish to introduce a penal code into Heaven, even though it were in their own favour.

We disclaim the doctrine that acts upon any proud *primogeniture* of religion; and we well recollect that Christ pointed to the miscellaneous crowd when he said, "Lo! my mother, and my brethren!" Indeed so convinced we are of the manifold corruptions of Christianity, ancient as well as modern, that we doubt not there might be a discipline and doctrine more conformable to the precepts and practice of its Author, than any that have yet appeared, either as sect or establishment, upon the face of the globe. Unless the Catholics of Ireland respect and even reverence the rights of conscience in all, we should believe (what we do not believe) that they wish to rise to Heaven, inflated by an inflammable spirit or gas, which renders the ascent precarious, and should it explode, the downfall certain and tre-

mendous. It was, we shall ever think it, the most untimely and unfortunate event, to intrude upon the great topic of political freedom, the theological "odia" attendant upon disquisitions into the antiquity, the merits, the future stability of the Catholic and Protestant churches; and we think it to have been most obligatory on the Catholic Board to disavow such sentiments, as must necessarily involve their civil and religious concerns into inextricable confusion, even though such sentiments were uttered (or rather published afterwards) by one of their own body, particularly if they had reason to conclude that the individual was the spokesman or the penman of a party.

The Catholic Board cannot resign their trust but to the aggregate meeting of the people which appointed them; but whether it may not suspend its meetings, during the sitting of Parliament, after having previously appointed a commission to superintend the progress, and report the event of the petition, it is left to their prudence (a virtue consistent with the most inflexible patriotism,) to determine. There are some occasions, and particular times, when the Catholic affairs might possibly be better served by a condensation of the Board into a committee, particularly and precisely instructed; and whether the present be not such a time, or whether they ought to wait till the law is made which is to carry the stroke of dissolution, is a subject maturely to be considered.

Meanwhile the Catholic Board is assailed from all quarters, high and low, preparatory to the grand attack; before the heavy artillery begin to play, the light armed troops, and the sharpshooters advance, charging, and discharging as fast as they are able. How many men

have made their fortunes upon the misfortunes of Ireland! How many men, particularly in one profession, have watched the signs of the times, and speculated to great personal advantage, by descending from time to time, to mix in the arena of party; and from a dignified situation, which was designed by the constitution, to be kept in a high and hallowed seclusion, (until called upon by the duties of its place) from such a situation, how many have been disposed to join in the fray of factions, to invert the order, and confound the distinctions of office; to give political lectures; and thus prejudicate the judgment of the country! How many individuals have by the use of such means, strangely and unexpectedly been uplifted in the surging smoke of occasional politics, from the low ground which nature had assigned them, "thence many a league, as in a cloudy chair, riding audacious, till that seat, soon failing, all unawares, fluttering their pennons vain, plumb down they drop, and to this hour down had been falling, had not the strong rebuff of some tumultuous cloud, instinct with fire and nitre, hurried them as many miles aloft." So it has been in our remembrance, with many who owe their fits of elevation, and gusts of good fortune, solely, to those circumstances which have depressed and degraded their country. To the society of United Irishmen (whose history may be comprised in the Latin proverb, "corruptio optimi, fit pessimum,") there are not a few in this country who owe all their personal distinction, or professional elevation; others, to the Union; and many political adventurers are, at present, speculating upon the imprudencies or indiscretions of the Catholic Board, and watching them until they

BELFAST MAG. NO. LXVIII.

may arrive to that maturity which may give sufficient ground "for the demand of a triumph." When ripe, say they, it shall be plucked.

Such is the fate of a country where patriotism is extinguished, and where in place of it, the spirit of party is like to rage more violently than ever, unless the power that holds the trident commands the furious elements to be at peace. "There cannot," says an *Irish secretary*, (yes, wonder as you will, but thus said a *Secretary of a Lord-Lieutenant in Ireland*) "there cannot a greater judgment befall a country, than such a dreadful spirit of division as rends a government into two distinct people; and makes them greater strangers and more averse to each other, than if they were actually two different nations. The effects of such a disposition are pernicious to the last degree, not only with regard to those advantages which they give the common enemy, but to those private evils which they produce in the heart of almost every particular person. This influence is very fatal both to men's morals and their understandings; it sinks the virtue of a nation, and not only so, but it destroys even common sense. When it rages in its full violence, this furious party spirit exerts itself in civil war and bloodshed, and in the instigation to such fearful results, for interested purposes. Even when it is under its greatest restraint, it notwithstanding, breaks out, naturally, in falsehood, detraction, calumny, and a partial administration of justice. In a word, it fills a nation with spleen and rancour, and extinguishes all the seeds of goodness, compassion and humanity."

Let then the legislature of the British Empire, pity, and effectually relieve this long distress of Ire-
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land. After the deliverance of Europe having been accomplished, by the establishment of such a balance of power, as will ensure peace abroad; let the legislature, in the responsibility which the Union has thrown wholly upon it, maintain a balance of justice between the parties or factions of Ireland, if it be now impracticable to substitute a love of country for party. Let it put down with an impartial and powerful hand, every organised association that usurps the functions of the government, gains a sort of livelihood by intestine broils, speculates upon the means of continuing them, and circulates through the country, from station to station, by grand jory telegraphs,* its alarms upon the approaching emancipation of millions of their countrymen. The emancipation or political adoption of Ireland, and its radical Union, thereby, with the rest of the Empire, is a subject perfectly distinct and separable (except by those who wish them confounded) from the imprudencies or indiscretions of the Catholic Board.

We still entertain strong hopes, that legislature, instructed by the past, provident of the future, unaffected by the fears and jealousies of party, will take the only sure method of healing the distractions of this country, "not by a decision that will more embroil the fray" not by training up the petitioners, for years past, into a sanguine expectation which is to meet with final disappointment; but, by the

single measure, of admitting ten or a dozen of Catholics, into an assembly meant to represent the whole Empire. We yet hope that this assembly, after centuries of discord, confusion, and misgovernment, will introduce a new era in Ireland; will see the political expediency of eradicating completely and casting into the fire, all principles and all practices of conquest in the conduct of its civil polity, and of securing civil and religious rights by the only effectual guarantee, *eligibility into political power*, such as will humble proud and selfish ascendancies to the level of the constitution, and will instantly, as by divine command, call forth the warm soul, and best resources of an island, inestimable to those who know its worth, and the means of extracting it.

Battles have been fought with various success, at Laon, at Rheims, and Soissons. The Silesian army under Blucher, has borne the brunt of the campaign, and the Austrian army seems to wait for events rather than to exert itself in an active advance to Paris. Many strong places are held by the French, with a command of the country in the rear of the combined forces, and should any great reverse happen, they would find it very difficult to effectuate a safe retreat. But the successful advance of Marshal Wellington into Gascony, will distract the attention of Bonaparte, and accelerate the success of the invading powers, unless a bar be thrown down in preliminaries of peace.

A brilliant, or in other terms, a bloody action was fought at Orthes on the 27th ult. in which, after the British army had passed the Adour (leaving Bayonne, St. Jean pied de Port, and Navarrers invested) the enemy was driven from all his positions, and obliged to leave open the direct road towards Bourdeaux.

* About twenty years ago, the grand juries pledged "their lives and fortunes" against any farther repeal of the Catholic penal code. The very next session of Parliament, the worst part of that code was repealed. The grand juries thought it better then to keep their lives and fortunes. Now, they more prudently proffer only their opinions.

That city has been already occupied by a detachment of the army, Lord Wellington having stopped with the main body of his forces, from an apprehension of Soult manœuvring by the way of Torbes, to get in his rear, and cut off communication with the force investing Bayonne, &c. The British loss in the engagement was very severe, both in officers and men, but that of the enemy was still greater, as by the report of Lord Wellington "the whole country is covered with the dead." Great victories are never obtained, his lordship well knows, but at high prices, and from Cæsar to the Duke of Marlborough, and downward to the present day, *he* has always acquired the reputation of the greatest general who has been the most prodigal of human blood. "The whole country is covered with the dead!" It is surely time to accelerate the preliminaries of peace, after twenty years war, to give mankind, a new object, and a new direction. Let it be remembered by government, that a legislative union is a fiction and a formality, without a NATIONAL UNITY, and that foreign peace itself, will be unsubstantial and unproductive, without domestic tranquillity.

It is said, that the mayor and corporation of Bourdeaux came forward to meet, with open arms, the detachment of the British army; but we distrust all *cockade loyalty*, and corporation patriotism, which turns, like the *vane*, to the blast of ruling power, from whatever quarter it may blow.

If the proposed additions to the Convention act should have the effect of preventing the meetings of the Catholic Board, and should also trench on the exercise of the right of petitioning, it is at least incumbent on Parliament to remove the

grievances which press so heavily on a part of the community. The same act which forbids the present right to meet, ought undoubtedly to repress the illegal meetings and processions of Orangemen.* A law to bear the characteristics of impartiality, should bear with equal justice on one side, as the other. If even-handed justice be administered, there is little room to doubt, but that the State will equally exert the power to abate the nuisance of the Orange system. If the attempt is made with hearty good will, the Catholics will have less occasion for the shield of their Board, at once to protect them from outrages, and to repress any attempts of illegal redress on the part of the uninstructed portion of their community.

* For the present month, the service of chastising Crito, and his band, is left to our correspondents. The writer of the remarks in the Retrospect, which declared a decided hostility to the aggressions of Orangemen, and in a bold tone reprov'd the almost total apathy and want of spirit in the town of Belfast, glories in his conduct. The inhabitants of this town, who wished to receive the praise of patriotism without deserving it, have felt the effects arising from wounded vanity, and the disclosure of their defects; while Crito, heading the *carrion-crows* who live on the corruption of the state, are furious at the attempt to drive them off from their plunder. So true is the remark of the present Lord Erskine, when an advocate at the bar, "Leave but the *practical* corruptions, and they are contented to wink at the *speculations* of theorists, and the compliments of public-spirited civility; but the moment the national attention was awakened to look to things in practice and to seek to reform corruptions at home, from that moment, as at the ringing of a bell, the whole hive began to swarm, and every man in his turn has been stung."

It has been already mentioned, that the Retrospect is the product of two pens. The writer of the parts alluded to in this note, is not ashamed of what he has done; neither does he wish to involve another in

The feuds of Thrashers and Ribbonmen might soon be expected to cease, if the irritations of Orangemen were effectually prevented.*

The grand juries of Cavan, Armagh, Tyrone, and Antrim, the two former, with some honourable exceptions, have sounded the tocsin against the Catholic Board. They are silent on the no less illegal meetings of Orangemen. Nay, some of these grand jurors are leaders of this faction. There is no impartiality in such proceedings. In the last County the only dissentient was a Catholic, himself a member of the Board. In the County of Armagh, George Ensor alone resisted. We record it to his honour.

The Catholics have, to their credit, refused to rescind their vote of censure on Dr. Dromgole. In this respect they acted rightly. The illiberality of their opponents ought not to influence them to encourage an illiberal spirit in their own body. Dr. Dromgole has been intolerant, and is deservedly censured. The right of every man to think and judge for himself, is the strong basis of religious liberty, and is the firmest support of the cause of Catholic emancipation. If this principle is

a responsibility which may not be pleasing. Engaged in the honourable warfare, and in what he considers the glorious defence of virtue and expiring patriotism, he is desirous to carry it on at his own charges, and to undertake the sole responsibility of such parts of the Retrospect, as shall hereafter be marked with the letter K.

* Judge Day, in his charge to the grand jury of Westmeath, appears to be alarmed, lest the present local disturbances are the forerunners of a business like to 1798. He may rest assured there exists no organized system of insurrection similar to that planned by the Irish Union. The Catholic Board do not foment these disturbances. The present outrages arise from ignorance brooding over ill understood grievances,

weakened, their most powerful argument is lost. To think, and let others think, is a maxim from which their cause will be most effectually aided. It is admitted, that in attacks on the Catholics, many Protestants have manifested great illiberality; but Catholics will injure their cause if they suffer themselves to retort on their adversaries in the same spirit. Engaged in the pursuit of equality of political privilege, let them prove themselves worthy of it, by repressing all tendency towards an exclusive spirit.

The resolutions of the Catholic Board regarding the conduct of Major Bryan at the trial of John Magee, is placed among the Documents. That Major Bryan should desert the proper duty of a chairman of a public meeting, is cause of regret. The line of honour for a chairman, is to avow his act and deed; for if he had disapproved of the resolutions of the meeting of the Catholics of the County of Kilkenny, held at the Black Abbey, he ought, in a manly manner, to have avowed his dissent: but his signature having been once affixed, all the attendant consequences ought to be fairly met. But there is a timidity sometimes infused by an attention to the niceties of legal advice, which is destructive of energy of character, and that intrepidity of mind, which may be designated by the name of civil courage. The doctrine of law, that truth is a libel, is so absurd and anomalous, that sometimes, to avoid the consequences of so pernicious a principle, men with their minds turned to legal definitions, are apt to counsel to get rid of the difficulty by substituting an evasive manner, which throws the burden of direct proof on the opposite party, and enables to withdraw from the effects by a species of legal fencing. Such was probably the case with Major

Bryan. The only way to retrieve an error, is an open disavowal and an abandonment of the adopted line of procedure. Such conduct often more than redeems the original offence. In his case the good effects of a tribunal of public opinion, at which all of every rank and station may be properly impleaded, is apparent. The Major has by the public voice been found guilty of a momentary dereliction. It rests on himself, by making the honourable and satisfactory amends of acknowledging error, to be restored again to public favour.

It is honourable in the Catholic Board to resolve to indemnify John Magee for the fines imposed, and the expenses he has incurred by the prosecutions against him.

The age of enthusiasm is gone! Enthusiasm is a quality infinitely more valuable than the factitious and delusive spirit of chivalry, at whose funeral the apostate Burke, in the dotage of mental decay, and with the infuriate purchased ravings of a distempered imagination, acted as chief mourner. Enthusiasm is now out of fashion, though it is of a truly ennobling quality. It is

“The guard and guerdon of all noble deeds,

and is truly “the unbought,” and in one sense, as disdaining to receive the wages of corruption, the “cheap defence of nations.” But it requires a large stock of virtue to support it, and virtue cannot be purchased or acquired at a low price. Enthusiasm is out of fashion. A cold calculating policy has usurped its place, and a sordid, selfish principle, generally prevails over the finer and more generous feelings. Indeed so generally are any approaches to enthusiasm or warm feelings discountenanced and repressed; by those who give the tone to public opinion, that men

are often ashamed to let any public spirit appear, and they even affect an indifference, which they do not fully possess, lest they should dare to differ from the low standard, which has been set up, and is become the fashion of the day. Hence patriotism in its enlarged sense, the love and the energy of virtue, have declined, are declining, and are likely, if the present retrograde course is pursued, to become totally extinct, and these islands to be the land of “minions and their slaves,” notwithstanding the empty and declamatory boasts so frequently repeated without feeling, or any just discrimination, of our possessing the freest constitution in the world. Many occurring events prove this boast to be unfounded, and that liberty, instead of increasing, is mournfully declining, as may be perceived as well from an inspection of the statute-book, in which will be found laws trenching on liberty, as also from the widely-diffused worse than indifference of the people. Yet this is the state recommended by the Quietists, who would fain reduce the country, by unceasing and unmeaning panegyric, to a dull unvaried monotony of public opinion, without any breeze of wind to agitate the stagnant atmosphere.

“They make a solitude, and call it peace.”

Forbid it virtue, and the remembrance of better times! Let the few stand their ground unawed, and not suffer themselves to be put out of countenance. Reform* must in time

* Among the Documents will be found the commencement of a series of letters from Major Cartwright, on the subject of Parliamentary reform. In the present state of the public mind, it is impossible to raise a virtuous flame. At least let us from time to time add a little fresh fuel to the almost expiring embers. A spark may yet be kindled, and raise the

take place, unless despotism spreads its influence over the land. The state of the national finances, and the weight of taxes, will force it on consideration. A people to be free have only powerfully and perseveringly to will it.

Whether in a national or municipal capacity, whether the government of a nation or a town is concerned, the people must be virtuous to insure a good government. For this reason it is incumbent on faithful monitors to warn the people to be virtuous, to be firm, to be ready to act on the defensive, if they wish to secure their rights. A bad government may, by reaction, increase the vice and misery of a country; but the people must be sunk in sloth, and in a great degree be themselves in blame for what befalls them, if they long permit tyranny to be exercised over them. Descending from the affairs of the state, to the concerns of a town, it has been the aim of some strictures which have from time to time appeared in this Magazine, to rouse the people of Belfast to a sense of their present state. Belfast has long had a character for patriotism, and perhaps many of the inhabitants persuade themselves they possess a large share of it. But patriotism of the true kind consists in deeds, and not in words, and it is in reality good for nothing, if it will not bear to be tried by the test of actions. The public spirit of the town is praised, and it is almost treason against its majesty to doubt it. Like the British constitution, it is the theme of panegyric. Both are indiscriminately praised, and on a calm examination, neither is found deserving of praise to the extent claimed. The cant

present unignited mass into a pure and fervid blaze.

phrases of "the freest constitution in the world," and "a public-spirited town," are often used, but without well-defined meaning. The task is unpleasant to point out defects, and to remove the veil with which they are covered; but it is the duty of a real friend to his country, and is no unkind act towards the individuals reproved.*

Belfast would not have received the repeated insults which have been lately given to it, if it were not for a calculation on its present passive state, unwilling, either through timidity, or a mis-called civility, to claim and defend their own rights, or those of their fellow townsmen.†

The remarks of Shakespear may be applied on the present occasion.

....." I know, he would not be a wolf,
But that he sees the Romans are but sheep;
He were no lion, were not Romans hinds.
Those, that with hate will make a mighty
fire,

Begin it with weak straws. What trash
is Rome,

What rubbish, and what offal ! when it
serves,

For the base matter to illuminate
So vile a thing as Caesar."

Among the many occurrences which discover the tendency of the times to encroach on liberty, may be noticed, the recent *translation* of Sir

* Maria Edgeworth, in "Patronage," has well described the proper mode of publishing truth. "The delicate, guarded, qualifying, trimming, mincing, pouncet-box, gentleman-usher mode of speaking truth, makes no sort of impression. Truth should always be strong, speaking or acting."

† It is asserted that on many occasions, previously to investigating into complaints by a magistrate, the question is asked, "Of what religion are you?" If public spirit was in full activity and energy, such abuses would be brought under the cognizance of the court of King's Bench.

Vicary Gibbs, as a judge in England. On the Prince Regent coming into unlimited power, fearing a change of ministry, Sir Vicary relinquished the office of Attorney-General, for a puisne judge's place. He afterwards passed to the office of Chief Baron of the Exchequer, and has again taken another remove to the chief seat in the Common Pleas. The boasted independence of judges is but a name, if translation holds out the lure of expectancy on the legal, as on the episcopal bench. The leaning to the side of power is already too great. Instead of increasing, measures ought to be taken to lessen the prepotency of motives inclining to look for patronage to the executive government.

The enlightened Sir William Jones, the late judge in India, in one of his letters to Sir James Macpherson, in relation to some promotion which appears to have been offered to him, expresses himself thus: "If the whole legislature of Britain were to offer me a different station from that which I now fill, I should gratefully and respectfully decline it. The character of an ambitious judge is, in my opinion, very dangerous to public justice; and if I were a sole legislature, it should be enacted that every JUDGE, as well as BISHOP, should remain for life in the place which he first accepted."

Sir William Garrow now holds the two apparently incompatible offices of Attorney-General of England, and Chief Justice of Cheshire.

The revolution in Holland has not gratified the sanguine expectations at first excited. The "Orange Boven" of a few merchants in Amsterdam has not been answered by the general voice. The business began at the wrong end. The exaltation of the sovereign Prince "to a higher dignity," preceded "the de-

liverance of the people." An increase to his own honours, and not to the people's happiness, appeared to be the object; quite consistently with the doctrine of the people being made for the prince, and not the prince for the people. Princes do not readily give up their infatuations. The Dutch were forgotten in the haste to advance the Stadtholder and his son to higher dignity, to please our Prince Regent, that he might have a son-in-law with a higher title. The people, in their turn, take little interest in the fortunes of their master and his new title. The new constitution offered to Holland is a complete mockery of freedom. A constitution should emanate from the people, and not from the rulers, especially when the first act of this prince is to assume a dignity not recognized by the ancient state of things, bad as they were, in Holland.

Norway demands the commiseration of all true friends to man. The King of Denmark in his manifesto announcing his forced acquiescence in the separation of the ancient connection of Norway, states in affecting language, the causes which led to this measure of hard necessity. Among other causes, he enumerates the seizure of the Danish fleet by Britain, an event ever to be held in disgraceful remembrance, which served to increase the famine in Norway, by preventing the supplies being sent from Denmark. The Norwegians are said to be a simple people, who have learned

....."the virtue, and the art,
To live on little, with a cheerful heart."

They are unspoiled by luxury, and consequently deservng to be free. The hypocritical pretence of the present being a struggle for "deliverance for mankind," as the venal

Southey sings, is clearly apparent, from the circumstance that not a voice is raised among the allies, or the war-loving faction at home, against the most iniquitous scheme of annexing Norway to Sweden, or in favour of the integrity of the Poles as a nation, although the robbery of Norway, and the partition of Poland, are measures of as flagrant injustice as any which have marked the progress of France.

The war faction, composed of those who boast of their exclusive loyalty, a selfish loyalty, felt only for the emoluments arising from the places and pensions enjoyed by them and their connexions, has already produced incalculable calamities, and is likely to produce still more. From this party, which assumes many appearances, but is one in principle, in Ireland Orange and Anti-Catholic, in England for High-Church, and inimical to Dissenters, in both intolerant, active, and clamorous, emanated the war-whoop. If they are not gratified to the full extent of their wishes against peace, they will endeavour, by carping at the terms, to render peace as unpopular as they can; and if they are unable to do all the mischief they wish, at least they hope to raise discontents at peace, and promote the bad passions of the people, by encouraging war propensities in a time of nominal peace.

The efforts of this party, so tyrannical, and so opposed to liberty at home and abroad, cause many people to fear that if this faction succeeded in their mad and immoral crusade against the French people, and Bonaparte, the liberty of this country would be still more endangered by the intoxication occasioned by their success. Thus they perniciously divide the country, and encourage some to cling to Bonaparte,

as the last refuge of almost expiring liberty. This is one bad effect of their hostility to the cause of liberty. Yet Bonaparte is not the friend of liberty. He is, however, infinitely preferable to the Bourbons; of whose restoration little probability appears from recent events in the north of France. A few persons wearing the white cockade, and declaring for the Bourbons, when Sir William Beresford took possession of Bourdeaux, is no proof of a general attachment to that cause. The public sentiment appears to run in a contrary direction. Some are always ready to bow to a temporary conqueror, and are next day ready to turn round to the new ruler of the day, with equal facility.

The French will have decided wisely, if they reject the Bourbons; but it is well they had the opportunity of making the choice. For how much more tolerable is even the ambitious rule of Bonaparte, than the oppressive corruption and grinding despotism of the old dynasty? The French now are taught by sorrowful experience to have a feeling and a taste of what, under their conquering leader, they inflicted on other countries; and have a sample of the practical horrors of war. Our people at home have unhappily the same propensity of loving war at a distance. They rejoice in hearing the tales of slaughter, and are even pleased to be duped by exaggerated and false accounts. The editors of most of the newspapers, and the issuers of bulletins placarded on the windows of post-offices, cherish this delusion. The people, undeceived to-day, by finding many of the reports false, are nevertheless ready to return again to-morrow, to yield equal confidence to similar unauthenticated rumours. Dupes to their passions, they gain no expe-

rience from former errors, but run on in the same round of credulity.

In a dispassionate moral review, the allies are not more clear than the French. They have by their subsequent conduct falsified their pacific declaration at Frankfort, and shown they were actuated by a like spirit of ambition, which led Bonaparte last year madly to undertake the invasion of Russia. It would however be unjust not to expose the infuriate cry in favour of destroying Paris in revenge for the burning of Moscow. Nothing can be more immoral and flagitious than this cry. Moscow appears to have been burned by the Russians themselves, who made it a sacrifice, to distress the enemy: and shall Paris, one of the important centres of civilization, be reduced to ashes to gratify the vengeance of the barbarous Cossacs, or the scarcely less barbarous war-faction at home?

After the destruction of Paris, is civilization in this new era to be taught by the modern conquering Alexander, and his hordes of semi-

barbarous Russians, and is the Bastille, as the first work of the Bourbons, to be rebuilt to complete the downfall of liberty, and the restoration of despotism, to involve in one promiscuous ruin the South of Europe, and our own isles? Such appears to be the tendency of the present frantic cry of the war-faction. It is essentially hostile to every principle of freedom! The deliverance of Europe is on their lips, but a deep-rooted aversion to every thing deserving the name of liberty is in their hearts!

Nothing new remains to be noticed respecting the war with the United States. It may, however, be worthy of remark, that the American government in the negotiation with Russia, declared they were not influenced by the French in their declaration against Britain. Thus one of the clamours raised to make the war popular with us, is left without foundation, and the story of French interests influencing American councils is refuted. K.

AGRICULTURAL REPORT.

From the 20th February, to the 20th March, 1814.

Notwithstanding the interruption given to the tillage by the late storm, the business has in general been got through better than was expected, and as the land turns up in fine order, there is reason to hope the crops this season will be got into the ground in good time, and afford an abundant produce.

In many parts of the country the oat crops that were sown before winter, have suffered considerably by the frost, and unless they recover much beyond their present appearance, will discourage the farmer from continuing the practice.

The wheat crops have been much checked in their growth by the severity of the weather, but are now beginning to put on a more healthy appearance. The sowing of oats has commenced in most of the early and dry soils, and will probably be general about the end of the month, if the weather continues fine as it is at present. The potato oats being an early kind, do very well to put into the ground in the first or second weeks of next month; but that species of grain seems to be so much adulterated by a mixture of other kinds, that very few farmers have their seed sufficiently pure, although they might easily remedy that defect by taking pains to select a small quantity every year, and sowing it separate from the mixed part of their crop. This method has been used by the writer of this Report for several years with complete success.